

FILE: CTF 140

ORIGINAL

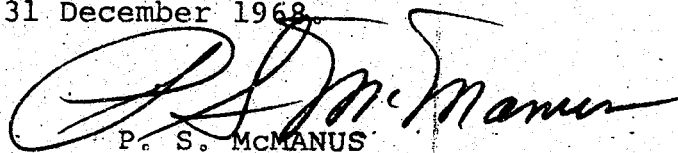
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Headquarters of the Commander
Manned Spacecraft Recovery Force, Atlantic
Task Force ONE FOUR ZERO
Naval Air Station
Norfolk, Virginia 23511

COMMAND FILE
POST 1 JAN 69

09:ts
5700
Ser 59
19 February 1969

From: Commander Manned Spacecraft Recovery Force, Atlantic
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)
Subj: Command History (OPNAV Report 5750.12); forwarding of
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12
Encl: (1) Basic Narrative
(2) Photograph of RADM P.S. McMANUS, USN, CTF-140
(3) Biography of RADM P.S. McMANUS, USN, CTF-140

1. Enclosures (1) through (3), forwarded in accordance with reference (a), summarize this command's operations during the period 1 January through 31 December 1968.


P. S. McMANUS

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BASIC NARRATIVE

COMMAND HISTORY FOR MANNED SPACECRAFT RECOVERY FORCE, ATLANTIC (TF-140) FOR 1968

The Recovery Control Center, Atlantic, was completed in late January and was dedicated by Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet on 1 February 1968. It is located in the headquarters building, SP-71, Naval Air Station, Norfolk.

Apollo 5 was launched from Cape Kennedy on 9 February 1968. This mission launched an unmanned, non-recoverable Lunar Module into orbit using an uprated Saturn I booster. USS PAIUTE (ATF-159) was deployed to Mayport, Florida for possible ocean salvage operations in the event of a mission abort in the waters adjacent to the launch site area. PAIUTE was released following the successful launch of Apollo 5.

Quarterly Apollo boilerplate recovery training exercises were conducted in the Virginia Capes area during the week of 19-23 February. These exercises provided training to participants and provided background data for improving recovery techniques. Atlantic participants in the exercise were: USS FURSE (DD-882); USS YORK COUNTY (LST-1175), a four plane detachment from Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron 5, three swimmer teams from Underwater Demolition Team 21, and four pararescue teams from the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service.

Communication exercises were conducted on 5 March with unalerted merchant ships at sea in order to evaluate their capability for supporting Apollo recovery operations on a "ship of opportunity" basis. Such support might be required in the event of a spacecraft landing in a contingency area outside of the normal recovery area. Participants in this exercise were SS AMERICAN ROVER, SS AMERICAN IMPORTER, SS CONTAINER DISPATCH, USNS MISSION SAN RAFAEL, AND SS EXPORTER.

During the period of 1-9 April, an evaluation of the NASA Mobile Quarantine Facility was conducted in USS RANDOLPH (CVS-15) in port at Norfolk and USS WILLIAM WOOD (DD-175) at sea in the Virginia Capes area. The purpose of this test was to evaluate the compatibility of the MQF with the ships involved and to explore other support problem areas which might be encountered when astronauts are returned from the lunar surface.

On 4 April, Apollo 6 was launched from Cape Kennedy. This was the second spacecraft to be launched by the Saturn V booster. Apollo 6 completed approximately 2 3/4 revolutions of the earth and was recovered in the Pacific recovery area by USS OKINAWA (LPH-3) Atlantic participants in the Apollo 6 mission included USS AUSTIN (LPD-4); USS DUPONT (DD-941); USS YORK COUNTY (LST-1175); USS CHIKASKIA (AO-54); USS OPPORTUNE (ARS-41); a five plane detachment

ENCLOSURE (//)

On 16-18 September, the USNS VANGUARD again went to sea to perform recovery practice for the Apollo 7 mission. The training was conducted by the staff operations department.

On 26-27 September, the amphibious transport ship USS CAMBRIA (LPA-36), the first ship of her class used in spacecraft recovery, received underway recovery training to qualify her for duty on Apollo 7 mission.

Apollo 7 was launched from Cape Kennedy on 11 October and recovered South of Bermuda on 22 October by the primary recovery ship, USS ESSEX (CVS-9). Two days later ESSEX arrived at Norfolk and off-loaded the command module. At NAS Norfolk in hanger LP-2, the command module was deactivated by NASA and North American Rockwell technicians, then flown to California for a complete engineering study.

Task Force 140 immediately began planning for the December flight of the manned Apollo 8. USS RANKIN (LKA-103) received recovery training off the coast of Virginia on 29 October and USS FRANCIS MARION (LPA-249) training was conducted in the same area on 31 October and 1 November.

USS CHUKAWAN (AO-100) conducted at-sea recovery training off Virginia on 6-7 November. NASA announced on 12 November that Apollo 8 would be launched on 21 December and would orbit the moon ten times before returning to earth.

During the week of 8-11 November, USS SANDOVAL (LPA-194) and USS GUADALCANAL (LPH-7) conducted recovery training off the coast of Virginia. Other units assigned to the Apollo 8 mission included: Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron THREE, Underwater Demolition Team 21, Weather Reconnaissance Squadron FOUR and the USS SALINAN (ATF-161), the inport standby rescue salvage ship.

Apollo 8 was launched on 21 December and was recovered on 27 December by the USS YORKTOWN (CVS-10) in the Pacific, 1000 miles south of Hawaii.